United Nations

Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Memorandum of Understanding for humanitarian assistance to Iraq signed at Headquartes this afternoon by Under-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Iraqi Ambassador Nizar Hamdoon.

+ Secretary-General to present new proposal on dismantling military structures of FMLN, and if necessary, new timetable for that process, by end of month.

+ Humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo resumes today following 24-hour security assessment, according to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

+ Future investigative inspections of Iraq's nuclear facilities and long-term monitoring of that country's activities were needed, Hans Blix, Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, tells General Assembly.

+ "The world is moving towards a new, more participatory, people-centered way of conducting international affairs", says the Secretary-General in his United Nations Day message.

+ Democratic People's Republic of Korea says Japan is not qualified to be Permanent Member of Security Council, in view of war crimes.

+ Michael Stopford, currently Special Assistant to Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, appointed Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Washington.

+ Fiftieth anniversary of United Nations should celebrate Organization's achievements and mark restructuring of essential organs, preparatory committee is told; Secretary-General says "United Nations is world's best hope".

+ First Committee told by Pakistan that arms exporters should not set security standards for other States.

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For information media—not an official record

+ United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) launches 1992-1994 directory of selected media and related data covering nearly 160 countries.

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The Memorandum of Understanding for humanitarian assistance to Iraq was signed this afternoon at Headquarters by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Eliasson for the United Nations, and the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations, Nizar Hamdoon.

According to the text of the agreement, United Nations guards would continue to be assigned as needed in the three northern Governorates of Suleimaniya, Arbil and Dohouk. The number of guards would not exceed 300, including a small administrative component, not exceeding 8, at their headquarters in Baghdad.

Under the agreement, the Government of Iraq would grant the United Nations field staff safe and unimpeded access, by air or road, to facilitate the implementation of the Programme. Iraq would also facilitate the safe and rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance commodities throughout the country.

A United Nations spokesman said earlier today that the humanitarian activity undertaken by the United Nations in the south would focus on food distribution and basic medical care. He emphasized however that the primary focus of the plan was the winter programme in the north.

The previous Memorandum of Understanding expired on 30 June. The new agreement will remain in force until the end of March 1993.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in a letter to the President of the Security Council, has said he would present a new proposal on the situation in El Salvador concerning the dismantling the military structures of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) by the end of the month, and if necessary, a new timetable for the demobilization of that force. The Secretary-General is due to submit his recommendations on the future strength and mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) by 31 October when its current mandate comes to an end.

In his letter, dated 19 October, the Secretary-General expressed concern over the decision by the FMLN to suspend the demobilization of its forces until new dates had been set for the start of the transfer of land and for other aspects of the Agreements which had fallen behind schedule. He was also concerned over continuing suspicions that significant quantities of arms held by the FMLN were not included in the inventories presented to the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) at the beginning of the cease-fire.

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The Secretary-General wrote that the proposed revision of the timetable must be the final one, and that both parties must fully commit themselves to abiding by the new schedule. He noted that the United Nations peace-keeping services were currently in great demand and that an undue extension of the planned schedule for ONUSAL must be avoided.
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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced today that the humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo had resumed following a 24-hour security assessment.

The announcement follows the suspension yesterday of humanitarian flights to the city due to increased fighting, which posed a "significantly increased risk" to relief workers, according to UNHCR officials. The UNHCR also suspended its convoy operations from Split to Sarajevo and Central Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to today's announcement, airlift officials had decided to interrupt the flights Wednesday morning following reports of possible fighting near Sarajevo. However, a mission of soldiers from the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) sent to the area to assess the situation found that there was no security threat.

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Future investigative inspections of Iraq's nuclear facilities and long-term monitoring of that country's activities were needed, Hans Blix, Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told the General Assembly yesterday.

Introducing the Agency's report for 1991, Mr. Blix said that monitoring was still very important because Iraq's scientific and technical knowledge remained largely intact and its clandestine procurement network was still in place.

His report states that on the basis of eight on-site inspection missions to Iraq during 1991, the Board of Governors of IAEA, for the first time in the Agency's 35-year history, declared that a Member State had failed to comply with its safeguards obligations as a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr. Blix said that in Latin America, Argentina and Brazil had opened all their nuclear installations to IAEA inspection. It was now likely that the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, known as the Tlatelolco Treaty, would come into force, making the whole of Latin America a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in a message issued today in connection with the observance, on 24 October, of United Nations Day, said the world was moving towards a more participatory, people-centred way of conducting international affairs and the United Nations was also undergoing change. "Today, we have a new opportunity to fulfil the Purposes and Principles of the Charter", he said. "Its goals -- peace, prosperity and political participation -- are the prerequisite of the life in dignity to which every man and woman aspires."

The Secretary-General said that critical issues -- development, disarmament, the environment, human rights and the underlying causes of conflict -- all required universal attention and effort. The need for the World Organization was greater today than at any time since its founding.

"I see hopeful signs that a new and better era is emerging", he said. "A reinvigorated United Nations will be at the heart of cooperative international progress."

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Discussing possible changes to the composition of the Security Council, the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea yesterday told the Sixth Committee (Legal) that a State that has failed to accept responsibility for aggression and war crimes committed during the Second World War was not qualified to become a permanent member of the Security Council. The representative, Hyon Hak Bong, said that Japan, before thinking of Council membership, should apologize for crimes committed in the past and make full compensation.

Exercising his right of reply, the Japanese representative, Eiji Yamamoto, said his Government had expressed on many occasions its profound regret and concern to Asian countries about its past relations with them and had extended the necessary compensation to the States concerned. Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were now discussing the normalization of relations between their countries. The issues between them would be settled by bilateral talks.

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The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should celebrate the Organization's achievements and mark the restructuring of its essential organs, members of the Preparatory Committee for that event were told this morning, as the Committee met for the first time. It was established by the General Assembly in April for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary in 1995, with the mission to recommend to the Assembly proposals for suitable activites in connection with the observance.

In his statement, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said democracy and development should be at the top of the Organization's agenda, and the support of the world opinion in that effort was vital. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council had put forward a proposal for an

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international summit meeting on social development, he said, and Denmark had proposed to host it in 1995. "The United Nations is our best hope, let us make the best of it", the Secretary-General said.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appointed Michael Stopford as Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Washington. Mr. Stopford, who is currently Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information (DPI), assumes his new duties on 2 November.

In 1991, he was appointed Chef de Cabinet to the Executive Delegate of the Secretary-General for the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme in Iraq, Kuwait and the Iraq/Turkey and Iraq/Iran border areas, joining the newly-established Department for Humanitarian Affairs in April 1992. From 1987 to 1991, Mr. Stopford was assigned to the United Nations Office at Geneva as Chef de Cabinet to the Director-General and Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights.

Mr. Stopford is a national of the United Kingdom.

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Transparency in international arms transfers could not be successful if it ignored such factors as indigenous arms production capabilities, existing stockpiles or the transfer of weapons technology, the representative of Pakistan told today the First Committee (Political and Security). Arms exporting countries, he went on, could not ascribe to themselves the right to determine the security requirements of arms-importing or non-weapon-producing States.

The representative of Hungary discussed the effectiveness of the prohibition and verification regime of the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxic Weapons and on Their Destruction. He said that it lacked the comprehensive verification regime that had been written into the draft chemical weapons convention and its regime should be strenghtened.

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The United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) is launching a 1992-1994 directory of selected media and related data covering nearly 160 countries.

The publication, entitled World Media Handbook integrates in some 500 pages a wealth of data not previously available from any other single source, and is primarily intended as a handy reference tool for United Nations information officials and other media-related specialists.

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